

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus and method for providing direct trunking between a TDM switch and an ATM backbone network are described. The apparatus is an interface adapted to convert pulse code modulated data to ATM cells and vice versa. The interface is adapted to emulate a trunk peripheral of the TDM switch by communicating with a computing module of the switch using a messaging protocol native to the computing module. The interface may therefore be connected to the TDM switch without any modification of the computing module. The interface is connected directly to a serial link of a fabric interface of the TDM switch. The advantages include a reduction in the capital investment in equipment required to connect a TDM switch to an ATM backbone network and a reduced footprint for the equipment.